

**A Woman, After All!**

'Take off that hideous bonnet,  
Dorothy. I want to see your sweet face  
without it.'

'Thou shouldst not speak so Charles.  
It is very wrong.'

'Why, little Dorothy? Tell me why.'

'Thou knowest favor is deceitful and  
beauty vain. We ought to bear testi-

mony against the vanity of personal  
looks.'

'Ought we? Then tell me why it  
pleased Providence to make you so, my  
small cousin.'

'Hush, Charles. I will not permit  
thee to speak to me in this manner.'

And little Dorothy Hicks, the Quakeress,  
put on the gravest air and struggled  
valiantly to turn the corners of her  
mouth down when they would to turn  
up.

'Don't look so serious, little girl—  
You positively alarm me.' And Charles  
Maynard burst into a hearty laugh  
that echoed through the poplar trees in  
the old garden. 'Now tell me, Dorothy—  
I insist upon knowing, as a member  
of your family, I consider that I have  
the right to be informed—are you going  
to marry Broadbent?'

'Friend Ephraim is an estimable  
man, Charles; thou must not speak of  
him thus.'

'Look Dorothy. There he is. I  
will quote no proverb, but the rim of  
his hat just turned the corner as I  
spoke. Now don't look as if you wanted  
to go back to the house, for you are not  
going. I'll tell you a secret. When I  
was down to the river this morning I  
found a boat with a tempting pair of  
oars lying in it, and I made up my mind  
that Dorothy Hicks and her wicked,  
worldly cousin from the populous city  
of New York, were going for a row in  
that very boat this evening. It is  
neither Hamcock's boat.'

'Yes, but, Charles, I fear it is my  
duty—'

'No! It isn't. You know you don't  
want to spend this lovely evening in the  
house entertaining Broadbent, and you  
want the sunset on the river.'

Dorothy looked doubtfully toward  
the house and wistfully toward the  
river.

'Femme qui hesite est,' Dorothy,  
which means 'If we don't hurry, Gray-  
cast will come out and catch us,'—  
Charles takes Dorothy's hand in his,  
and in a moment they are on their way  
to the shore.

'But, Charles, see that cloud in the  
south. If there were to be a storm?'

'But there will not; come, jump in!'

The oars were lifted into the rowlock,  
Dorothy takes the management of the  
rudder in her hands, and soon they are  
gliding over the smooth surface of the  
water, leaving a track of silvery bubbles  
behind them. It is a lovely evening—  
The misty shadows are gathering in  
east and west; the clouds blood red  
and purple, are casting a rosy light all  
over the broad river; a fresh breeze is  
blowing round their faces, and waves splash  
against the sides of their boat like low  
monotonous music. Charles is talking  
about his home, telling Dorothy about his  
aunts and cousins he has not seen  
for a long time, and amusing her with  
stories of his college days, and his  
efforts to make his way in his profession  
which were so unsuccessful at first.

Neither of them notices the breeze  
grows fresher, and that the dark cloud  
in the south has spread over the horizon  
and is covering it with darkness.

Precisely a low, muttering growl of  
thunder starts them from the dream  
into which they had fallen.

'Turn back, Charles, turn back!'  
screamed Dorothy, 'the storm is upon  
us! They had been rowing with the  
tide; The river is very wide, and the  
increasing force of the waves and the  
wind together is stronger than when  
they attempt to turn about the water  
rushes into the tiny boat. Both faces  
grow pale in the murky light as they  
see the danger.

'It is impossible; you can't do it!'

'Tell me, Dorothy, what is that dark  
object just ahead?'

'It is a ledge of rocks, but when the  
tide comes in from the sea it will be  
covered, and with a low moan Dorothy  
sank from her seat and covered her  
face with her hands.

'We will try and land there. The  
tide will not turn for an hour.'

The effort was successful. The  
ledge is reached, and Charles carries  
Dorothy to the very highest rock and  
lays her gently down.

'My love, my little love,' he cried  
kissing her helpless hands; 'I have  
kissed you?'

'Stop!' she exclaimed. 'Listen.  
There is a boat! It is coming this way.'  
Dorothy is upon her knees, and a wild  
cry of thanksgiving comes from her  
lips.

Ephraim Ford had followed them.  
The heavy boat with its single occu-  
pant is strong enough to resist the  
waves, and as he hears them, they go  
down to meet him.

'Back!' he cries. 'I will not take  
one of you; it is not safe.'

The grim Quaker, with his stern,  
emotionless face, wrenches away the  
slender hands that cling to Charles,  
and clasping Dorothy tightly in his  
arms lays her at his own feet in the  
bottom of the boat. Not a word is  
spoken until they reach the opposite  
shore. Then he takes her up again and  
carries her to the nearest fisher's hut  
up the beach.

As they stand within the shelter of  
the little cabin, Dorothy looks at him  
with wild eyes, and a cry of torture  
issues from her white lips.

'Go back, go back! You will go back  
for him?'

'Go back for your elegant city lover,  
whose ignorant carelessness would  
have cost you your life for me?'

Dorothy falls on her knees and grasps  
his cold hands in agony of entreaty.

'Go back, go back!'

'Promise me first that you will not  
marry him. Swear it as the world's  
people do.'